



NEWS RELEASE
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‘Energy Superheroes’ Join Afterschool Students For *Lights On Afterschool* Today

Book-Signings, Robot Building, Exercises with Solar Bugs Planned at Afterschool Programs in Charleston, Denver, Houston, and Mons, Belgium

Washington, DC – Local “Energy Superheroes” – so designated in a book about women in the energy profession – are set to meet with afterschool students in four cities today, Thursday, October 26, to celebrate the 24th annual [Lights On Afterschool](#). The women are signing copies of the book, [Everyday Superheroes: Women in Energy Careers](#), then leading students in STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) activities – all part of the nationwide celebration of the ways afterschool programs support children and families.

The mission of the “energy superheroes” is to spark excitement among students in energy careers. The authors will sign free copies of the book, share their experiences and answer questions from students, then lead them in STEM exercises. These events result from a partnership between the Afterschool Alliance and the *Everyday Superheroes* book series, which aims to connect women leading the nation’s energy transition with the workers of tomorrow. The authors of the books and several energy companies are also donating books to afterschool programs around the country.

As featured in the award-winning multicultural nonfiction children’s book series, *Everyday Superheroes* are real-life women with energy careers who are leading the energy transition to clean power. Published by WiseInk, the book shares the relatable stories of energy industry role models – women working in STEM careers.

“We are excited to be sharing the stories and superpowers of women in energy careers with afterschool students and military families. STEM Superheroes is dedicated to changing how we power our planet and engaging youth in that process,” said *Everyday Superheroes* co-author Erin Twamley.

“Students love exploring STEM through hands-on, team-based activities in their afterschool programs,” said Afterschool STEM Hub Manager Leslie Brooks of the Afterschool Alliance. “We’re seeing examples of that at [Lights On Afterschool events around the country](#) this month. Our nation will need many more skilled STEM workers in the years to come, so it’s more important than ever that we ensure students have access to quality afterschool programs, which make STEM learning fun.”

The Superhero events are among thousands of *Lights On Afterschool* events taking place this month around the nation. The four Superhero events taking place today:

- **Charlottesville, VA:** “Superheroes” from Apex Clean Energy are visiting students at the STEAM Discovery Academy,. RePowering Schools and KidWind are part of this STEAM learning celebration. Afterschool students are learning about the importance of renewable energy by meeting women with cutting-edge careers in STEAM.
- **Denver, CO:** “Superheroes” from national laboratories are building solar bugs and sharing their energy careers with 4th - 6th graders at Colorado Dream Foundation. Group14, a local consulting firm, is a sponsor of this event.
- **Houston, TX:** “Superheroes” are supporting GROW’s Literacy Day at BakerRipley Gulfton Sharpstown Campus, a community center and elementary school. Youth are engaging in storytime, STEM education, and a book signing.
- **Mons, Belgium:** *Everyday Superheroes* co-author Erin Twamley is celebrating with U.S. military families at the SHAPE school-age center operated by the United States Army Garrison, Army Child & Youth Services. Families are participating in STEM activities, including building robots, and receiving free, signed copies of the book.

Some 24.7 million U.S. children not in an afterschool program would be enrolled, if a program were available to them, according to a [survey of 1,500 parents](#) commissioned by the Afterschool Alliance and conducted by Edge Research in May and June of 2022. That is the highest number ever recorded. A [household survey](#) released in summer of 2021 confirms that afterschool programs have been ramping up their STEM offerings, but students from low-income families are most likely to miss out. Seventy-three percent of parents report that their child’s afterschool program offers science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) learning opportunities, up from 69% in 2014. Three in five parents of afterschool students (60%) report that their child participates in STEM in afterschool twice or more per week, up from 52% in 2014.

Organized by the Afterschool Alliance and launched in October 2000, *Lights On Afterschool* is the only nationwide event celebrating afterschool programs and their important role in the lives of children, families and communities. Thousands of afterschool programs across the nation are celebrating *Lights On Afterschool* this month with open houses, rallies, parades, and more. Capital One and Clear Channel Outdoor are generous sponsors of *Lights On Afterschool* this year.

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